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the cases epitomized, and a complete index of the four volumes of the work.

We will find that some subjects in this book are very concisely dealt with, Equity being disposed of in three sections, and Evidence in eighteen, while, on the other hand, Eminent Domain has thirty-three sections, including four fully reported cases. From these dry statistics may be gathered the magnitude of the work and the labor involved in its preparation. The difficulty with such an enormous task is that the work must of necessity be very hasty, and important questions will escape notice, statements being made which would not be supported on further investigation. An Iowa case is authority for the remark : "The rule in Shelley's Case cannot be invoked to defeat the intention of the testator" (§ 254). Though, of course, the best authorities have always held the contrary, the editor suffers this case to pass without comment, while, on the other hand, such platitudes are indulged in as (§ 258) "Vested remainders may be conveyed," and three cases are cited to support this startling proposition.

As a digest of all the real property cases decided in any given year, this book is highly satisfactory, but as an authority on the Law of Real Property to take the place of a good text-book, it cannot be relied upon.

R. A.

THE NEGOTIABLE INSTRUMENTS LAW. Drawn, Annotated and Edited by JOHN J. CRAWFORD, of the New York Bar. New York: Baker, Voorhis & Co. 1897.

This work is indicative of a tendency, which has been growing more and more apparent throughout the United States, to bring the statutory provisions of the several states to as great a degree of uniformity as possible, especially in the realm of commercial law.

The chief factor in obtaining this result has been the Conference of Commissioners on Uniformity of Laws. In 1895 the Commissioners took in hand the subject of bills and notes, and Mr. Crawford was eventually appointed to draft a bill covering this important field. The bill as drawn and adopted by the Commission has been enacted by the Legislatures of New York, Connecticut, Colorado and Florida. In these states, therefore, Mr. Crawford's book will be of the utmost importance, as it not only contains the text of the existing law, but being fully annotated, with reference to the intention of the Commissioners, it will materially aid in the interpretation of the act.

This, of course, is its primary object and will prove its chief source of usefulness. As, however, the work is largely a codification of the Common Law rules, and, as the decisions are cited wherever the former law has been adopted, the book will be found to contain a collection of authorities which will be serviceable in any state.

While the greater portion of the work done by such bodies as the Conference of Commissioners consists in crystallizing the law

and sending it forth in a logical and proper form, so that it may be the more easily consulted and readily comprehended, not the least advantage accruing to the profession and to the public at large from their endeavors is to be found in the careful discussion given to controverted theories and the final adoption of a certain and intelligent rule. A single example of a much mooted question, which has been definitely settled in the present work, will suffice to show the beneficial effect of such deliberations. Take, for instance, the subject of anomalous indorsements, upon which the courts in different jurisdictions have entertained such opposite views, one treating the writer of an irregular or anomalous indorsement as a joint maker of the note, another as a guarantor, another as an indorser, and a fourth as a second indorser, while in England his act is regarded as having no legal effect.

The confusion arising from such a conflict of authority is certainly to be deplored. It has been done away with, however, in those states which have adopted this well drawn law and the ably considered decision of the Commission to the effect that an irregular indorser should, in reason and sound law, be treated as a second indorser will go far, perhaps, to settle the trend of opinion in the matter. In fact, wherever the courts have failed to agree, the different theories have been compared, and that one having most to recommend it adopted. As Mr. Crawford's book gives the reasoning by which the Commissioners arrived at their conclusions, it will be of assistance in jurisdictions where a given question is still open to judicial determination.

M. L., Jr.

PROBATE REPORTS ANNOTATED. By FRANK S. RICE. Vol. I.
New York: Baker, Voorhis & Co. 1897.

The above is the initial volume of a new series of reports which are to be the successors of the "American Probate Reports." Their plan is stated to be, to give in an annual volume contemporaneous or recent decisions of the courts of the different states upon all matters cognizable in Probate and Surrogate courts, of general value to the profession. The editors propose to exclude all cases which "carry their own solution in the mere statement of the facts that underlie them" and to present only those "that embody the more intricate phases of probate litigation;" to give dissenting opinions where they rest upon fine distinctions and present the *contra* view convincingly; and to report all cases promptly, regardless of their appearance in official form. On the whole, the scheme of the work is well considered, and, if properly carried out, should result in a series of reports of great value to every lawyer.

But the present volume is marred by some unfortunate defects, sometimes suggestive of careless proof-reading, and sometimes of hasty preparation of the subject-matter; while the abridged quotations from Schouler, Dem. Rel., (P. 569, l. 43) and 3 Johns. Ch. 481 (P. 570, l. 4) are most ambiguously worded and convey no